

**FIVE IGBO ART MUSIC COMPOSERS: AN ABRIDGED  
HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION OF THEIR LIVES AND WORKS**

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**Abstract**

**I**gbo Art music refers to literary/written Igbo musical compositions which trained musicians produce under the influence of their western music training. It is a product of Igbo African's contact with Western education and religion. The composers are mainly of Igbo extraction and have excelled in the art in various ways. They have equally made effort to document their works in form of sheet music, however, lack of improved documentation strategies (online), led to the loss of many of their works and hence the need for this research. The research method adopted for this study includes observation, oral interview and review of related literature. This work tends to document five Igbo art music composers selected each from the Five South-Eastern States of Nigeria which are; Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo states. These choice is basically on their level of popularity, academic achievements and contributions to Igbo Art Music, compared to their peers in their states. The outcome of the study is hoped to provide a platform for related works and set the ball rolling for further studies or similar works to be extended to all known Igbo Art musician.

## **Introduction**

The arrival of the European missionaries in Nigeria in the middle of the nineteenth century brought new changes both in the scope and content of Igbo music which led to the emergence of Art music. Semi-formal art music making and training in Igbo land can be traced to have started many years ago with the church through the missionaries (CMS) that brought Christianity into the Igbo land around 1857. In those days, church music was the only form of art music that was in existence with the church as the only patron of the newly introduced music genre. Other forms of art music were not known to have been in existence and if at all, must have been sparsely performed and patronized. In Yoruba land (western Nigeria), Lagos to be precise, where the missionaries arrived before coming to the east (Igbo land), Lynn in Nwamara (2009) informed that the year 1860 marked the first performance of western music (art music) in Lagos with the audience consisting of merchants, churchmen, civil servants, students and artisans, while the performers were mostly black immigrants. In Igbo land no specific date is known to the authors to have been given as when such a performance took place for the first time, though having stated earlier that church music started with the church in Igbo land, it is still not known of the period when such was experienced.

According to Nwamara (2009), these composers began by direct translation of English songs to Igbo language, creating religious words for existing folk tunes and creating new melodies for new texts, some of which are derived from the Bible. Okafor in Agu (2002) observes that: "they had no musical training as such apart from what they learnt in schools and teacher training colleges. Their success depended to a very large extent on their interest in music" One of the greatest feats they eventually achieved with their strong spirit of nationalism was eradication of the belief that Igbo native airs, traditional rhythms and instruments had pagan connotation. Some of these composers include Daniel Ojukwu, Nelson Okoli, Rev. Ofili Kelly, Ishmael Nwangene,

Uzoma Asiji, Godson Opara, Ben Okagbue and Ikoli, Harcourt Whyte of the Methodist church etc. They are referred to as early generation.

However, with the establishment of the Department of Music, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, in 1961 which brought about a new phase in the composition of Church music, Igbo people began to receive formal and structured music education. They were taught by European musicologists and Western trained Africans based on Western music concept. They improved on the short comings of their predecessors in their compositions and blended both Western and African music idioms. "This cross fertilization of African and Western musical elements has resulted in a type of musical synthesis called African art music" (Adegbite, 2001, p. 77), which Igbo art music is one of its several branches found in Nigeria, West Africa. Some of the composers that fall under this category include David Okongwu, Sam Ojukwu, Felix Nwuba, Humphrey Nwokolobia Agu, Dan C. C. Agu, Ugochukwu Onwuka, Chuma Chukwuka, Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara, Chukwudi Ezeokoli and many others.

In recent times, some other higher institutions in South Eastern Nigeria have followed suit to establish Departments of music like Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (Anambra State), Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam (Anambra State), Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu Alike Ikwo (Ebonyi State) and Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri (Imo State). These institutions have aided in very significant ways to produce more art music composers of Igbo extraction as they are found within reach. The five composers selected for this study are drawn from five Igbo states; Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states as follows; Prof Alvan-Ikoku O. Nwamara from Abia, Prof Dan C.C Agu from Anambra, Mr Emmanuel Eze urom from Ebonyi, Dr Jude Chika Nnam from Enugu, Prof Christain Uzoma Onyeji from Imo states. As mentioned earlier,

they are selected from their states, based on their level of popularity, academic achievements and contributions to Igbo Art Music, in comparison with their peers in their states. This does not in any way suggest any form of superiority or supremacy to other composers.

### **The Igbo of Nigeria**

The Igbo tribe are located in the south-eastern part of Nigeria which consists of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States. A sizeable Igbo Population is also found in Northern Delta and Rivers states. Geographically, the Igbo homeland is divided into two unequal sections by the Niger River—an eastern (which is the larger of the two) and a western section. The Igbo people are one of the largest ethnic group in Africa with more than 30 million people and with a population density ranging from 140-390 inhabitants per square kilometer. Altogether, Igboland has an area of some 40,900 to 41,400km. Until the arrival of the British colonialists, the Igbos practice decentralized systems of government where Leaders of this system are chosen on the basis of age; the older an individual is the more likely they will be chosen as community leaders who are typically referred to as elders. The supreme leader known as Igwe has the final say on all issues. The Igbos were known to be very hardworking and talented people. Agu (1992) notes that:

*The Igbos are mainly farmers, traders, and tradesmen. They have always appreciated that through sacrifices and religious songs they appease their gods into benevolence, since they depended and look upon them for rich harvest and steady progress in their trade and social life. The Igbo worship their gods regularly and no matter how many times this was done; music accompanies most stages of it. (p. 13).*

The Igbo of Nigeria are very religious people and music, whether vocal, instrumental or a combination of both, also plays significant roles in

their religious ceremonies, periodic festivals and ritual sacrifices. Music is the pivot on which all cultural, religious and social activities rotate. Onwuka (2001) affirms that, "it does not only accompany many events of the life cycle but also helps to preserve and transmit societal norms, values and much of its cultural aspirations. (p.1).

### **Igbo Art Music**

Art music is a term that refers to a musical tradition implying advanced structural and theoretical considerations and a written musical tradition. Ekwueme (2008) describes art music as "music of serious intent, composed and performed in the idiom of European classical music by formally trained musicians in conservatories, music institutions and universities as opposed to folk and popular music" (p. 118). The term "Igbo art music" was coined and used mostly by scholars typically to describe the works of Igbo composers that exhibit the influence of Western classical music. Igbo art music can be seen as a genre of music created and developed by Nigerian-Igbo musicians who had training in techniques of western art music; which exists in various forms like solos, duets, trios, choruses, anthems etc.

Semi-formal art music making and training in Igbo land can be traced to have started many years ago with the church through the missionaries (CMS) that brought Christianity into the Igbo land around 1857. In those days, church music was the only form of art music that was in existence with the church as the only patron of the newly introduced music genre. Igbo art-music compositions, despite their deep roots in Igbo tradition, are performed by music specialists in front of an audience that cannot participate. Such musical presentations did not exist in Igbo traditional music practice. For instance, music, especially singing, existed in everyday Igbo land as part of culture, religion, vocation, and drama. Participation typically involves the whole community, where one group sings a call, and another

sings the response. However, the fusion of African and Western music idioms in a manner that gives particular prominence to the strong features of Igbo music was a strategy for reinstating Igbo cultural identity in music in church and school.

### **Development of Art Music in Igbo Land**

In recent times, with the establishment of departments of music in some of Nigerian institutions of higher learning, art music making and composition have undergone various stages of improvement and attained a certain level of recognition in Igbo land. One unique quality of most Igbo art-music composers is that they have a thorough understanding of the Igbo traditions, which gives them more flexibility when they combine African and Western classical idioms. According to Nwamara (2009), the development of art music in Igbo can be categorized into two periods or rather, generations of Igbo composers as follows:

- (a) First Generation Composers and
- (b) Second Generation Composers

Each of these generations has its peculiarities in form, techniques and style of composition which distinguish it from the other although the latter did not immediately deviate completely and entirely from the practice of its predecessor; instead it started by developing new ways, means and approaches to Igbo art music compositions and later graduated to making efforts towards possibly creating and achieving art compositions of complete Igbo identity. As this paper intends to look into the history of the five selected Igbo art music composers including their lives and works, the two classifications will be looked into but with more emphasis and focus on the second classification since it is the generation that the five selected Igbo art composers represent.

### (a) The First Generation Composers

These are the composers who according to Okafor (1976:63), "had no musical training as such apart from what they learnt in school and in the teacher training colleges with their success depending to a very large extent on their interest in music." They were talented, committed and hardworking having exhibited all these qualities in their compositions. Nwamara (2009) noted that the fact notwithstanding that they inherited art music making and composition directly from the missionaries and were indoctrinated to follow the western music concepts, idioms and ideologies strictly and sheepishly, they were able to create their own works especially through translating the texts of English songs to Igbo texts, creating new texts for existing folk tunes, creating new tunes for new texts or new tunes for existing hymn lyrics and in some cases, rearranging existing tunes.

According to Omibiyi (1979), the growth of nationalism led to the development of Nigerian creative music which was as a result of the revolt against European culture between 1890 and 1920 in Nigeria. Indigenous art music actually started with the determination of the early Christians to restructure Christianity to suit African customs and institution where the use of native music would flourish. One of the greatest feats they eventually achieved with their strong spirit of nationalism was eradication of the belief that Igbo native airs, traditional rhythms and instruments had pagan connotations. Some of the Igbo art composers that fall within this group include Nelson Okoli, Daniel Ojukwu, Ishmael Nwangene, Rev. Ofili Kerry, Ikoli Harcourt Whyte, Ben Okagbue, Very Rev Msgr. Cyril Ezenduka, Uzoma Asiji, Godson Opara, Rev David Okongwu and others.

### (b) The Second Generation

This generation of composers emerged as a result of the establishment of the Department of Music in some Nigerian institutions of higher learning, starting with that of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu

State 1961; Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education 1974; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra state 1992; Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State 2012; Alex Ekwueme-Federal University Ndufu Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State 2015; Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu State 2015. With this high level of formal music training and education, they did not only improve on what their predecessors did, they developed original Igbo art music compositions that derived immensely from both the Igbo compositional idioms and the western harmonic principles and techniques. These composers took care of the shortcomings of the music of the First Generation composers in the process of creating their own music and consequently, took Igbo art music and art music generally to a higher level that is near perfection.

Nwamara (2009) informs that these composers have so far made indelible marks in the world of music nationally and internationally. Some of their works have received much acceptance and patronage both by the Igbo and non-Igbo audiences and many of these composers have achieved beauty in form and style. Their works have made much impact and have conveyed much feeling to their various audiences. Among many of these contemporary Igbo composers include:

Prof. Meki Nzewi, Late Dr. Joshua Uzoigwe, Felix Nwuba, Okechukwu Ndubisi, Sir Sam Ojukwu, Prof. Dan Agu, Prof. Laz Ekwueme, Nwokolobia Agu, Lawrence Emeka, Alphonso Okosa, Prof. Christian Onyeji, Humphrey Nwafor, Dorathy Ipere, Chuma Chukwuka, Anozie Ubani, Ugo Onwuka, Joe Onyekwelu,, Chudi Ezeokoli, Dr..Jude Nnam, Prof. Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara, Rev. Fr. Ben Agbo and Tochukwu Moneke, Jude Nwankwo, Urom Eze Emmanuel and many others.

The five composers under study here are all selected from this second generation composers; Prof. Alvan-Ikoku O. Nwamara from Abia State, Prof. Dan C.C Agu from Anambra State, Mr Emmanuel Eze Urom from



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Ebonyi State, Dr. Jude Chika Nnam from Enugu State, and Prof. Christain Uzoma Onyeji from Imo state.

### **The Composers**

This is arranged alphabetically according to their state of origin -Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo.

#### **Composer No. 1: Alvan-Ikoku Okwudiri Nwamara (Abia State)**

Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara, a professor of African musical arts composition, theory and performance is a prodigiously talented composer, performer, music producer, prolific writer and researcher was born on the 30th day of July 1975 at Uzuakoli, to the family of Chief Christian Iheanyichukwu Nwamara (the Ebubedike 1 of Umumba-Nsirimo) and Lolo Emily Uloma Nwamara of Umumba-Nsirimo, Umuahia L.G.A. of Abia State. He is popularly called De Music Oracle.



**Plate 1: Alvan-Ikoku Okwudiri Nwamara**

In the course of his training and work experiences, he had the rare privilege of getting in contact and working with many big names in Nigerian musicological scene such as the late Felix Nwuba, late Okechukwu Ndubisi, and the living Sir Sam Ojukwu, Prof. Meki Nzewi,

Prof. Dan Agu, Prof. Christian Onyeji, Prof. Richard Okafor, Prof. Laz Ekwueme and so on. Nwamara's contact with these great masters and his love for pop music has a great influence on his style of choral compositions. Some of his sacred choral compositions include *Mu Onwe m bu Mbiliten'onwu*, *Ihe adi womma*, *Tonu Ja*, *Yoke Nke m*, *Akwukwo iwu*, *Nwunye gi ga-adi ka osisi vine* (composed for his wedding), *Ka m si yoo nna* (dedicated to his son, Kamsiyonna), *jagajaga*, *ezinwa*, *Annah*, *Ajo di* and numerous others. As a composer, he has many compositions and music publications to his credit.

(a) **BOOKS:**

1. Nwamara, A. O. (2019). *The Voyage of DOREMI: An Opera*. Awka: Printscape Publishers Ltd.
2. Nwamara, A. O. (2018). *KAMSIYONNA Dramatic Chorus Book*. Awka: Printscape Publishers Ltd.
3. Nwamara, A. O. (2017). *The Saints Triumphant Vol. I*. Awka: Soleks Publications Ltd.
4. Nwamara, A. O. (2016). *Contemporary African Art Music for Christian Worship in Igbo Liturgy*. LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing. <https://www.lap-publishing.com/>
5. Nwamara, A. O. (2016). *Sacred Igbo Contemporary Youth Songs Series Vol. II*. Awka: Soleks Publications Ltd.
6. Nwamara, A. O. (2015). *Sacred Igbo Contemporary Youth Songs Series Vol. I*. Awka: Soleks Publications Ltd.
7. Nwamara, A. O. (2010). *The Soloist's Companion Vol. II*. Awka: Mount Carmel Publishers Ltd.
8. Nwamara, A. O. (2007). *The Soloist's Companion Vol. I*. Awka: Mount Carmel Publishers Ltd.

**(b) Discography:**

1. 2022: Onwu Bu Uzo Ndu: Tribute to Late Ma Joy Nwakego Okonkwo. Original Composition Performed by Vocomotion Chorale. Composed, Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
2. 2022: Onye Nso Anaa: Tribute to Late Ma Joy Nwakego Okonkwo. Original Composition Performed by Vocomotion Chorale. Composed, Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
3. 2021: Unu Ebela Akwa: Late Engr. Chuba Ogbutor. Original Composition Performed by Vocomotion Chorale. Composed, Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
4. 2020: Ezinna Cyril Laa N'udo: Late Dr. Cyril Belonwu Umeh (UMEONONIRUAKU). Original Composition Performed by Vocomotion Chorale. Composed, Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
5. 2019: Lord Heal Our Country, Nigeria. Vocomotion Chorale Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
6. 2019: Olisa Biko Zite Udo. Vocomotion Chorale Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
7. 2019: Gini Kayi Geme. Vocomotion Chorale Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
8. 2018: Aga m n'eto Jizos Kraist Vocomotion Chorale Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**
9. 2018: Aka Ngozi: Vocomotion Chorale Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication.**

10. 2017: *Mu Onwem bu Nbilite N'onwu na Ndu: Vocomotion Chorale* Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube**
11. 2017: *Nwunye Gi G'adi Ka Osi Vine: Vocomotion Chorale* Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. **YouTube Publication**
12. 2016: *Nwanyi Akiti - Department of Music Choir, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka* **YouTube Publication.**
13. 2016: *Ladon Sings - A Compact Disc Recording of Ten Songs by a Soloist: IzuuEzeme.* Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts.
14. 2011: *Welcome to UNIZIK: A Collection of Four Songs (Nigeria National Anthem, Anambra State Song, UNIZIK Anthem and UNIZIK Welcome Song).* Produced in Collaboration with Prof. Dan C. C. Agu.
15. 2008a: *UNIZIK Water.* Original Jingle Composition in Video Compact Disc. **YouTube.**
16. 2008b: *Akajiani N'Ogbunike: A Tribute to Prof. Ilochi Okafor (SAN) Vice Chancellor, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (2005 - 2008).* Original Composition in Video Compact Disc (VCD). Also in **YouTube.**
17. 2007: *Jesus Lives.* Published Live Performance of an Easter Cantata by Harold De Cou's in audiotape. Okumedia's Studio, Onitsha
18. 2003: *Shine in Me.* Compact Disc recording by Bro Moses Obiorah Edeh Arranged, Directed and Produced by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara for Alvikon Concepts. A.P. 002. Fogosonics Studios, Onitsha.
19. 1997: *Sweet Jesus.* Published Original Choruses in Audiotape. AP. 001. Rogers All Stars Studios, Awka.

**Some of his commissioned compositions include;**

1. 2022: Birthday Song for The Archbishop of Province of the Niger and Bishop of Awka Diocese, Anglican Communion, Most Rev. Dr. Alexander C. Ibezim
2. 2019: Nnukwu Ajuju for Campus Classics- All Nigerian Universities Contest (UNIZIK contingent)
3. 2018: Faculty of Arts Anthem (Nnamdi Azikiwe Univ. Awka)
4. 2017: Association of Nigerian Musicologists (ANIM) Anthem 2017
5. 2016: FUNAI Anthem (Collaborative Composition of Fed. Univ. Ndufu-Alike Ikwo Anthem)
6. 2013: Akwukwo Iwu A (Diocese on the Niger). Onitsha.
7. 2012: Ndokwa Diocesan Anthem (Edited)
8. 2012: Examine Yourself (Asaba Diocese) Synod Anthem
9. 2012: K'ayi Jee Na Bethlehem (Xmas Africana) (Vocomotion Chorale
10. 2009: Yoke Nkem Adighi Egbu Ngbu. (Asaba Diocesan Music Festival.) Jan
11. 2008: Democracy in Anambra (for the Commissioning of the Stock Exchange) Onitsha
12. 2008: O dim Ka M Nabu Mgbe Nile - An Arrangement (Diocese on the Niger). Onitsha.
13. 2007: Seat of Wisdom Anthem (School Anthem). Enugu. July
14. 2005: Mu Onwem Bu Nbilite N'onwu Na Ndu. (Diocese on the Niger). Onitsha. March
15. 2005: That We May be One (WOWICAN National Singing Competition). March
16. 2005: Sharon House (Diocese on the Niger). Onitsha. Via Master Voice Chorale
17. 2004: Anambra Enwerewo Onwe Ha (Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS)). Awka. July
18. 2003: Late Chief Mrs Mokelu's Biographical Anthem (Master Voice Choral Group). May

19. 2003: Lawyers and Nation Building (For NBA Bar National Conference in Enugu). July
20. 2003: Water is Life (based on FGN and UNICEF lyrics). July
21. 2003: Trinity Model Secondary School (School Anthem). Nnobi. Sept.
22. 2003: Press CDS Anthem NYSC, Yola Adamawa State.
23. 2002: N. N. P. C. is Twenty-five Years (Master Voice Choral Group at Abuja). Nov.
24. 2002: Jerry and Cee School (School Anthem) Obosi. Dec
25. 2000: Arts for Living (University of Nigeria Faculty of Arts Song) Nsukka
26. 1999: MUSAN Anthem (Music Students' Association of Nigeria) Nsukka
27. 1993: A. S. A. Anthem (Anglican Students' Association) Onitsha: January 6

Other sheet compositions include;

28. 2014 Gini Kayi Geme?
29. 2013 He's Coming Back - SATB Arrangement
30. 2012 Anah Nwa Nma. Jan.
31. 2011 Ndi Nwuru Anwu Nwe Ngozi
32. 2010 Iya (A Solo Composition). March
33. 2010 Ko Wa Fin Iyin Fo Ni Ise Nla (A Solo Composition). July
34. 2007 Mi Khe Shigwe (A Solo Composition). July
35. 2006 Stage Band Arrangement of UNIZIK Anthem
36. 2006 Ekeresimeesi
37. 2006 Amuru Ya N'ulo Anu
38. 2005 Ekworo (In Collaboration with Lady N. Okonkwo)
39. 2003 Chukwu Nna Di Nso (SATB) Feb
40. 2001 Atula Egwu

And so many others, including biographies and other spontaneous compositions; too numerous to mention.



### **Composer No 2: Daniel Chikpezie Agu (Anambra State)**

Daniel Chikpezie Christian Agu is a professor of ethnomusicology and composition, music director, conductor, performer and organist. He was born on 18th January, 1949, at Iyieniu Hospital, Ogidi, Anambra State, to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Agu. He is a native of Obosi in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra state, Nigeria.



**Plate 2: Daniel Chikpezie Christian Agu.**

#### **His Compositions:**

Some of Dan Agu's Sacred and Secular works/musical contributions;

1. Welcome to Nike Diocese (2016)-Contains (6 tracks) in a CD
2. Selected choral works of Dan C.C Agu (2015)-Contains (10 tracks) in a CD
3. Ekelem Gi Nnam , Chinekem (2011)-Contains (7 tracks) in a C.D
4. Welcome to Unizik -Contains (4 tracks) -2 by Dan Agu; 1 by Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara; and 1 by Ben Odiase.
5. Abu Oma Devid (2018)-Contains (12 tracks) in a CD
6. Ihunanya (1985)-Contains (12 Tracks) in a Plate
7. Women, the pivot of the Nation (1980)-Contains (8 tracks) in a Plate.
8. Udo Di Nma (1976)-Contains (8 tracks) in a plate.



9. Let the choirs sing. Vol 1(1988)-Contains 10 Anthems.
10. Let the choirs sing Vol. 2 (2001)-Contains 13 Anthems.
11. Let the choir Sing Vol.3 (2001)-Contains 10 Anthems.
12. Art songs for contemporary Nigerians choirs (2002) -Contains 7 Anthems
13. Contemporary Classical Anthems (2002)-contains 5 Anthems
14. The African Church Anthem Book-(2003)-contains 20 Anthems.
15. Ten songs arranged for Children-(2023)-contains 10 songs
16. Anthems and chants for worship Vol.1 (2023)- contains 4 Anthems and 35 chants
17. Songs of life (2017)-Contains 48 Anthems.

Samples:

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**"UDO AMAKA"**  
(Duet for Soprano and alto)

Dan C. C. Agu  
(Feb. 1979)

Keyboard

Moderato

7

12

U - do, u - do, u - do u - ma-ka o u - do, u - do, u - do

N'è - zie u - do u - ma-ka o yu yu yu u - do

Kbd.





## NYE YA EZUMIKE

Funeral

Emma Urom Eze  
(Ancestor Savio)  
December 2019

Slow ♩ = 100

Doh is Ab

1. 2.

REFRAIN

ke a-nyi na rio Gi bi-ko N-na doo REF O bu e-zio-kwu n'a-nyi bia-ra bia n'a-nyi ga a - la ma o-ge ru - o. REF

15

O - ge nwa-ne a-nyi e-ru - go bi-ko N-na na-ba-ta ya n'u - do REF K'i-he Gi di-o-kpu cha-kwa si ya bi-

### Composer No 4: Jude Chika Nnam (Enugu State)

Dr. (Sir) Jude Chika Nnam also known as Ancestor is a prolific composer, a multi-instrumentalist and a choral conductor. He holds a Ph.D in music from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A liturgical composer with over 2000 catholic songs to his credit. He was born on November 10, 1965 into the family of Chief Patrick Chukwu Nnam and Mrs Felicia Nnam of Umunnaugwu, Amechi, Uwani autonomous community in Enugu South local government area of Enugu state.



**Plate 4: Jude Chika Nnam**

Dr. Nnam has written many commissioned compositions. They are numerous and their names can be found at the footage of the compositions dedicated to them. They include The Art and Culture department, FCT, Abuja, Abuja Contigent during The national festivals of Arts and Culture (NAFEST), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Abuja, and other Anthems for some parishes in Abuja, Lagos, Enugu, Onitsha, Asaba and Port Harcourt. Since his works are generally in choral structure, choirs around the world find them useful during masses and church services. He has also done several projects for the Yamaha keyboard including a show in Dubai. In May 2017, Dr. Nnam was endorsed as a Yamaha brand Ambassador for Nigeria for their keyboard products with some of his songs sold as a standard in Yamaha keyboards.

Dr Nnam has published an e-book that can be found online titled 'The Ancestor's Opium', it is a collection of a hundred composition written by him. Among over 2000 songs he has composed are songs like 'Take and sanctify', 'In Thanksgiving and Love', 'In love with Jesus', 'Naranu Rie', 'Chineke Gbaghara', 'Kosisochukwu', 'Olisa', 'Uche chukwu', 'Agam eje n'altar', 'Abum Achicha', 'Thanksgiving of amazing grace' etc.

Samples are below:

**KOSISOCHUKWU**

Allegro Maestoso = 170 (Igbo - Nigeria) JUDE NNAM

Doh is Ab INTRO

SOPRANO  
Chi-ne-ke mo, O-nye-nwe ma, a-bia-ra-m'n-ru Gi, i-nye Gi-g-ke

ALTO  
Chu-kwu o-ma, O-bi-n'i - gwe! Na-re - ke-le,

TENOR

BASS

PIANO

**CHINEKE GBAGHARA**

Lento REFRAIN BY JUDE NNAM

Doh is Ab

SOPRANO  
Oh! Chi-ne-ke gba-gha-ra. Mee ebe-re Nna, O-nye-nw'a-nyi

ALTO  
Oh! Chi-ne-ke gba-gha-ra. Mee ebe-re Nna, O-nye-nw'a-nyi

TENOR  
Oh! Chi-ne-ke doo! Mee ebe-re Nna, O-nye-nw'a-nyi

BASS  
Oh! Chi-ne-ke Oh! Chi-ne-ke O-ka-ka, gba-gha-

PIANO

### **Composer No 5: Christian Uzoma Onyeji (Imo State)**

Prof. Christian Uzoma Onyeji hails from Attah in Ikeduru local government area of Imo state, Nigeria. He was born on the 15th August, 1967. He had his Diploma in Music Education in 1988, BA (Hons) in 1990, MA in music in 1995, all from University of Nigeria Nsukka. Doctor of Music in 2002 from University of Pretoria, South Africa. First, second and third degrees are all in composition. He is inclined to all types of music but with more interest in art music, vocal and instrumental.



**Plate 5: Christian Uzoma Onyeji**

### **Works and Achievements**

Prof. Onyeji stated that his compositions have contributed to the development of the Arts (African Art Music) in different genres. He developed new creative processes (Research Composition, Drummistic piano composition, Africa vocalism, and Nsukka Choral School (NSC). These are frequently performed by professional performers and use in teaching and learning in schools especially syllables for secondary school. His compositions in highest demand includes Ufie (Igbo dance) for piano and Oga (Maiden Game) for piano. These are frequently performed by pianists. His best interesting composition includes "Ufie" (Igbo dance). This was his breakthrough composition in Africa art

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 music for piano in the drummistic style. His most fulfilling and best  
 rewarding composition is "Ufie" (Igbo dance).

### Selected Creative Works

These include some of the Symphony, Piano works, solo songs, choral  
 works, and experimental instrumental works. To mention but a few:

Title of the Work		Kind	Medium	Year of Composition
1	Eze Nno Nu	Vocal	Solo Soprano/Piano	2nd October, 1989
2	Love's Desire for Sop, Ten and chorus.	"	Serenade	1989
3	Dim Le Abum Oyoyo	"	Three part song	1989
4	Ele Dim'oma	"	Solo Sop./Piano	1989
5	Nemi Amambo	"	Mixed Voices	1989
6	Ina Za Muje	"	"	"
7	Kra Kum Ko	"	"	"
8	Ezigbo Nnameze Nno	"	"	1990
9	Ziwalele	"	"	1991
10	Soi Soi	"	"	"
11	So Pi	"	"	1992
12	Ko No	"	"	"
13	Onye Turu Gi Ime	"	Solo Sop./Piano	"
14	Mambu Zule	"	"	1993
15	Dakkada Anthem	Vocals	SATB	2020

Some of his Instrumental Works include:

1	Afro trombone	Instrumental	Trombone/Band	1993
2	Ufie (Igbo Dance) for Piano (Three Movements)	"	Piano solo	1993



3	Afro trombone11	"	Trombone/Band	1996
4	Ufie Thematic 1	"	Oja and Ekwe (Experimental)	1996
5	Ufie Thematic 11	"	Oja and Ekwe (Experimental)	1996
6	Mmuo (Spirit)	"	Piano	1998
7	Ije (Motion)	"	"	"
8	Okike (Creation)	"	"	"
9	Afo Naga (The Passing Year)	"	"	"
10	Ikwe (Mortar)	"	"	"
11	Hi Yom (A Quartet)	"	Flute, Soprano,Piano, Cello	2003
12	Oga (Maiden's Game) For Piano	"	Piano	2003
13	Jazz Duet	"	Ten Sax. /Piano	2003
14	Opi Akuko	"	Clarinet	2012
15	Iya	"	Piano Duet	2019

**'UFIE' (IGBO DANCE) FOR PIANO**

THIRD MOVEMENT

Christian Onyeji

**AGADA GIRI**

Christian Onyeji

### **Summary/Conclusion**

The usefulness of documentation cannot be overemphasized especially for musicians, audiences who believe in originality or who might be exposed to misrepresentation. From the study, it was discovered that a lot has been written on Nigerian art music composers from the early generation to the present contemporary music art composers but not much has been written on Igbo art music composers. Most of the composers from the early generations are long forgotten and only few knew about them because there is no compiled documentation that really discuss about them and their achievements. It is worth noting and exciting when a generation can access their last generation achievements which were properly preserved for the future, hence the sole aim of documentation is accessibility. As Euba (1976) demonstrate, the early generations of Nigerian music scholars valorized preservation of Nigerian music as a crucial aspect of their scholarly framework, their noble and novel approaches could not be sustained after them because they lack sustainable and documentation framework. This study shows that some of the selected composers such as Prof. Alvan-Ikoku Nwamara, Prof. Dan C. C. Agu, Prof. Christian U. Onyeji, Dr. Jude C. Nnam and many other Igbo art composers from the second generation have larger part of their works though not all, recorded in audio and visual form, and are available on online (via website, YouTube, Facebook etc.), yet there is need to collate and notate works of other Igbo art music composers both alive and dead in all the eastern states to avoid loss of their works and from going into extinction

This work will no doubt provide an access to historical resources from the past to this generation and the other ones to come on Igbo music art composers. This can also serve as instructional materials to educational institutions and also, the research works has made available some historical account of some notable Igbo art music composers to other researchers, composers and analysts for further

study. That we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and performing works by old western composers is a testament of the effort made towards the preservation of their musical creativity.

### **Recommendations**

World civilizations are in part defined by their authentic cultural materials and historical documentations preserved or stored for posterity. The selected composers have made remarkable impact on both the academically trained composers and have in no small measure influenced the church art music composers that came after them, both the academically trained and non-literate composers and the new generation composers. Therefore, government, private sector and academic sector have to investigate into the documentation and archiving of life and works of notable Igbo art composers, their authentic performance practice and to promote global presence and relevance. Also, having the compilation of Igbo art music composers will encourage the young scholars to value and compose Igbo art music knowing that their works will be documented for posterity. Documentation of Igbo art compositions should be encouraged to ease research problems and finally encourage the introduction and application of Information and Communication (Computer) Technology in Igbo art music composition and development for easy global accessibility and acceptability. On a last note, the author wishes to stress here that this research work has not really covered all. The researcher thereby suggests that further research on it or related topics be conducted subsequently for update and currency, and more Igbo art music composers both from the ancient and modern generations especially in the eastern region be brought to limelight to enable the younger generation to study them both in secondary and university level.

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